

North Cumberland Fire District

Meeting Minutes

November 17, 2010

Present:

Edward LeBlanc, Chairman

John Aharonian

Brian Campbell

Matthew Gannon

Paul Lindquist

John Patrick McCoy

Michael Spaziani

Absent:

Robert Audette

Others Present:

Fay Dakake, Clerk

Martin Klara, Tax Collector

Robert J. Murray, Treasurer

David DelVecchio, Chief

Opening:

The regular meeting of the North Cumberland Fire District (NCFD) was called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 17, 2010 by Chairman LeBlanc.

A. Approval of the Minutes

The clerk's report dated October 20, 2010 was reviewed.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Lindquist, to accept the clerk's report for October 20, 2010. All in favor. So voted.

B. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Murray submitted his report, offered copies to all those in attendance and highlighted the following:

- **NCFD 2009/2010 Payroll Overtime**

Overtime for the month of October \$15,882. (25.2% of standard payroll compared to 27.2% for the same month last year, down 2%). On an aggregated year-to-date basis (2010/2011), overtime is 30.24% in comparison to 32.5% last year.

- **Month of October Profit & Loss**

- Revenue Side**

- o Total Revenue \$763,965. of that \$763,501 is taxes collected, compared to a budget of \$800,575.

- o Taxes Collected

- For the Year \$1345K collected vs. \$1189K for the same period last year
 - YTD \$763,000. vs. \$767,000. in “09”
 - YTD 2010 69% of the budget collected vs. 69% in 2009

- Expense Side**

- o Account # 6010 Truck Repairs – \$875. Over budget for the month, \$692. to Minuteman Trucks – rear brakes/air leaks

- o Account # 6030 Upgrading & Pur New Equipment – Credit balance of (351.42) Check received representing reimbursement for the hose that was cut. However, in November, the same dollar amount will be sent to the insurance company.

- o Highlighted items represent contractually mandated accounts totaling \$120,486 which represents 90% of the expenses during the

month.

- o Account # 6480 Professional Fees- \$187.50. Paid to St. Peter and Kastle for various legal work.**
- o Total expenses for the month \$133,457. vs. a budget of \$128,945. Slightly higher than budget.**

In summary, revenues exceeded expenses for the month by \$630,507. vs. budget of \$671, 630. down \$41,022.

• October Year-To-Date Profit and Loss

- o Total Revenue \$1,372,262. compared to a budget of \$1,406,615. Total expenditures thus far for the year \$688,359. vs. a budget of \$669,885.**
- o Cautionary items marked in yellow for year- to- date, spend vs. budget, for the entire fiscal year.**
- o Account #6560 – Payroll Service – Paychex has been contacted and is researching a mysterious \$1,100. debit to the account.**

• Balance Sheet

- o Current cash position at the end of October \$1,056,714. Approximately \$600,000. higher than the previous month.**
- o Taxes receivable remain at \$869,260. as of October 31st. inclusive of previous years still outstanding.**
- o Imbedded within the \$135,544 of accrued expenses continues to be the \$84,150 for water hydrant fees.**

- o Smoke Detector Fund increased by \$5,000.**
- o Total Assets \$3,371,256.**

Motion was made by Mr. Campbell, seconded by Mr. Spaziani, to accept the Treasurer's report. All in favor. So voted.

C. Tax Collector's Report

Tax Collector Klara submitted his report dated November 2010. Taxes collected in October total \$764,163.92 All checks received have been processed. Two ISF checks will be reported in next month's statement. A second mailing is being prepared for those who are delinquent.

Motion was made by Mr. Lindquist, seconded by Mr. Gannon, to accept the Tax Collector's report dated November, 2010. All in favor. So voted.

D. Chief's Report/Monthly Expenditures

Chief DelVecchio submitted his monthly report for October 2010 and highlighted the following:

- o Live fire training exercise with the Smithfield FD that is part of an upcoming NOVA television special**
- o "Pink Heals" apparatus and representative at station as part of**

nationwide tour for cancer awareness.

o National Grid Gas/RISE representative in the station to perform an energy survey/audit.

o RIEMA removed the last of the 800 mhz radio equipment stored in the station.

o Correction was made to expense account #6410 The Times - for grant bid advertisement to read \$74.88. Total bills will be adjusted accordingly.

Motion was made by Mr. Spaziani, seconded by Mr. Gannon, to accept the Chief's Report for October 2010 with expenses. All in favor. So voted.

E. Committee Reports

Financial Management, Budget, Taxes

Chairman LeBlanc report receipt of a letter from Opal (tax bill processor) stating they have been purchased by Vision, requesting a signature to transfer the NCFD account.

Apparatus/Buildings/Grounds

Mr. Aharonian had nothing to report.

Personnel Committee

To be discussed in Executive Session.

Labor Management/ Negotiations

Mr. Campbell reported a memorandum of agreement has been signed in regard to not paying overtime any time a fire marshal or deputy chief was absent. Negotiations with the Union will open the 30th of November.

F. Old Business

Health Insurance for Retired Chief Carpenter

Documentation has not been received from retired Chief Carpenter in regard to his healthcare coverage. As explained in recent correspondence, if not received by December 1, 2010 his medical insurance will be terminated.

Review of October Meeting Items

 Check Processing

Chairman LeBlanc and Tax Collector Klara revisited the process by which checks are processed and have determined that in light of recent interest rates and the cost of training and hiring additional personnel, for the foreseeable future, the tax collector will continue process checks and have them processed by the 30th of October. A grace period is provided for checks that are received within the first week after the 1st of October.

 Special Meeting

Although originally targeted for December 1, 2010, due to the availability of adequate space, the special meeting is confirmed for December 7, 2010 at the North Cumberland Middle School at 7:00 p.m.

Independent, impartial moderator of the meeting will be former North Cumberland resident, Rick Singleton.

 Recommended By-Law Changes

After the recent agreement with the Board on two proposed additions to the By-laws, Chairman LeBlanc met with resident Arthur Lambi and crafted new wording (attached) for these additions.

1. Chairman LeBlanc read aloud the proposed wording for subparagraph (1) Article III, Section 2(e). Treasurer Murray stated his opinion that a “review” would not be the most cost effective procedure. If there is concern, he believes an “agreed upon procedures report” is a better approach.

Being inundated with tax collections during the month of October, Tax Collector Klara voiced concern with the “no later than 1 October each year” inclusion.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Campbell, to amend the By-laws, as put before us, with the addition of saying “conducting a review or agreed upon procedures audit” and this to be a new section 2e under Article 3 to the By-laws and changing 2e to 2f and 2f to 2g. All in favor. So voted.

This proposed addition will be presented for a vote to the residents of the District at the special meeting on December 7.

2. Chairman LeBlanc read aloud the suggested amendment to the By-laws regarding the annual operating budget and to add subparagraph (1) under Article III, Section 2.(c)

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Lindquist, “Should the proposed annual operating budget of the District exceed the previous year’s budget by more than 3% the proposed budget increase and its impact on the fire district tax rate shall be included in the advertisements for the annual meeting required under Article III, Section 2 (1) of these By-laws.” All in favor. So voted.

3. Official E-mail

Official e-mail addresses for residents to communicate with the chairman, the trustees and the tax collector have been set up and are as follows:

chairman@ncfd.ne.coxmail.com

trustees@ncfd.ne.coxmail.com

taxes@ncfd.ne.coxmail.com

4. Due Date on Tax Bills

After a recent comment by a resident, that the tax bills lack a due date but include a penalty date, tax bills were reviewed and a due date was found to be listed at the top of the bill. An explanation of the penalty date is also included.

5. Discussion of a Proposal to Refinance Engine 5 as brought forth by resident Arthur Lambi

Chairman LeBlanc explained the current balance on the truck has an interest rate of 3.75% with 40 payments remaining, paying approximately \$6,000. per month. The district has \$24,364. remaining in interest to be paid on the loan. At the annual meeting and the years leading up to the purchase of the truck, one of the concerns of the residents was that the loan be paid off quickly and at a low interest rate to avoid substantial interest charges. Resident Arthur Lambi's proposed alternative to refinance the Pierce PUC truck (attached) was read aloud.

Discussion ensued and included:

- philosophy of either lower monthly payments over a longer period of time vs. less interest to be paid in a shorter period of time**
- life expectancy of a truck.**
- data collection for use in analysis of truck purchased**

Lacking a motion to refinance the truck, Mr. Lambi was advised he was welcome to present his proposal at the special meeting.

G. New Business

Clerk and Trustee Resignations

Chairman LeBlanc reported the resignation of the District Clerk, Fay Dakake, effective in December. As required, the position will be advertised November 18 and 25th in the Valley Breeze and the

Woonsocket Call. The deadline for applications is December 3, 2010.

At the December monthly meeting the board will consider applications.

The resignation of trustee, Robert Audette was announced. Chairman LeBlanc explained in the event of a resignation, the vacancy is filled by appointed by the Board. The appointee will fill the term of the person who resigned. In this case Mr. Audette's term ends in June of 2012. Whoever is appointed to fill his position will serve until June of 2012 and they can ask to be elected to the position for another term if they so choose. Mr. Lambi has shown interest in filling the position. Chairman LeBlanc asked those in attendance, if they had interest in being a member of the Board, to contact him, preferably by e-mail, with description of their background and the reason for their interest. He expects to make an appointment at the special meeting on December 7, 2010.

H. Public Comment

Resident Tim Draper suggested remote deposit capture which allows for immediate deposit of checks. Treasurer Murray has considered it, but found it to be cost prohibitive. Mr. Draper suggested East Commerce and offered to help the Board with this item.

Resident Steve Jackson asked if the board had the right to enter into a contract that financially obligates the voters and, if at the annual

meeting, they could vote on that financial aspect. Chairman responded yes. Mr. Jackson commented that he is not in agreement with Mr. Lambi's proposal regarding the budget exceeding 3% and would prefer that it be limited to 3%.

Although indicated in the balance sheet, resident Bill Dennen asked for a line item indicating the monthly truck payment be added to the monthly profit and loss statements.

Concern with overtime was expressed and the Board was reminded that overtime should be addressed during contract negotiations.

Arthur Lambi reviewed his proposed agenda for the upcoming special meeting to include:

- Motion to refinance Engine 5
- By-law changes
- Proposal to reduce the trustees' fees by 50%
- Limit the trustees' ability to enter into any contract, particularly any union contract, that extends more than 12 months
- Proposal that the trustee replacement not be released until at least the December 15th regular meeting, if not the January 15th meeting.
- Request to Consider utilization of part-time or call firefighters during the evening
- Capping of Healthcare Costs
- Discussion of Fire Marshall stipend
- Conflict of interest policy

In response to Mr. Lambi's request to utilize call firefighters during the evening Mr. Lindquist noted both Cumberland Hill and Valley Falls have 3 full time union men on in the evening and utilize their call person as the 4th person, not to replace one of their union contracted firemen. He asked Mr. Lambi to be mindful that when NCFD responds to an incident many times the 3rd man may end up driving the rescue to the hospital while the rescue personnel tend to the patient reducing manpower at the station.

Chief DelVecchio cautioned with 3 man minimum staffing, operation is under the minimum requirements of NFPA. In regard to not having many runs at night, he disagrees. The majority of fatal fires occur at night, when people are home sleeping.

Chairman LeBlanc reviewed the By-law requirements of filling the vacancy of a trustee and the clerk's position.

A request was made for the Fire Department to set up an e-mail system for residents to be informed. Chairman LeBlanc explained meetings are posted along with meeting minutes on the Secretary of State web-site. It was requested that the meeting minutes be posted on the NCFD web-site as well.

When asked who can vote at the special meeting, Chairman LeBlanc

explained, according to the Charter, any resident of the District.

Robert P. O'Neill submitted a proposal for an amendment to the By-laws (attached). This amendment would require that taxes be paid in full in order for a resident be eligible to vote. Discussion and voting of this item was held until the next meeting.

Arthur Lambi questioned if the District had a conflict of interest policy and if there had been any disclosures relative to business between trustees, officers or firemen. Chairman LeBlanc responded that the District does not have a written conflict of interest policy. He offered to look at a suggested conflict of interest policy if it were a concern. Chief DelVecchio commented that if he were referring to J&J Small Engine, one of the co-owners is a call firefighter. Chief DelVecchio addressed the concern and revealed that a recent purchase made through J&J, was done so only after higher bids were received.

Executive Session per R.I.G.L. 42-46-5 (a)(2)

Motion was made by Mr. Gannon, seconded by Mr. Lindquist and unanimously carried to enter into Executive Session in accordance with R.I.G.L.42-46-5 (a)(2) personnel employment contract at 8:50 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion was made by Mr. Lindquist, seconded by Mr. Gannon and

unanimously carried to adjourn the public meeting at 9:24 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Fay Dakake, Clerk

Approved by: Edward LeBlanc, Chairman
